

## **Environmental Board Minutes, May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

Meeting called to order at 6:58pm.

Members Present: Chair William Beck, Martha Dahlinger, Jerry Kroehn, Kathy Fiebig, Deirdre Nieves, Dave Solberg, Bill Strong, Secretary Tim Winslow, Assistant City Engineer Jamie Harmon

Excused Members: Vice-Chair Michael Sergeant

Guests: Jessika Maas, Kalamazoo Valley Community College student, Stacy Rickland,

Bill introduced our new member Bill Strong.

Kathy makes a motion to approve the minutes as amended, seconded by Martha. Motion passes.

### **Invasive Species Project**

The invasive species team is mainly looking at proposing three different recommendations to city council in June. One would be for the city to develop an invasive species management plan, amend the weed ordinance to include invasive plant species under the definition of noxious weeds, and to do a survey of all city-owned properties and map all invasive species on all properties.

The team still needs to put together into a project elements form. We need to have our documentation into the city council before the end of the month in time for the June 13<sup>th</sup> meeting.

The team will send out its documentation to the rest of the board for feedback.

The board asked many questions regarding exactly what the weed ordinance amendment would entail, what species the plan might prioritize, and what properties the city would try to get surveyed.

The board has voted to let the invasive species team proceed with its approach and will make sure to get its documentation in order by the end of May.

### **Natural Spaces Project**

The team tried to obtain a map of all natural spaces within the city limits of Portage. Unfortunately, such a map does not exist at the moment. The team has noticed though where there are some natural spaces and developed land and thought about how better to harmonize the two.

There is a lot going on in the city right now with regard to development. Thus, the city needs to keep better track of what natural spaces are changing and what other developments may be underutilized.

The team would like to recommend that the city create a layered map of space/property within the city limits of Portage. Basically, the team wants to create an inventory of what types of land are within the city limits of Portage.

Martha brings up the point of using existing resources to help with this endeavor in that there are all sorts of maps already out there.

Jerry brings up that the definition of natural is not clearly defined anywhere by the City of Portage. This might be something that the team will need to work on with the city. Defining natural space, greenspace, developments, etc. will be important to creating this map.

Currently, the team is just going to recommend that the city get this map created and will then determine what are the next steps.

The board approves the team to move forward with this recommendation regarding the creation of this layered map.

### **June Portager Article**

Tim recommends the article that Kathy wrote regarding smart tips regarding grass growth. Others bring up that the invasive species article might be more timely though so we are thinking of tweaking the article that Kathy wrote in April and submitting that to the June Portager.

The board approves Kathy to tweak her invasive species article as she sees fit and will submit it for the June Portager.

### **Deer Update**

Dave attended the Kalamazoo Environmental Board meeting and the Kalamazoo Christian High School students worked on a survey regarding deer in the Asylum Lake area. He will be able to keep us updated regarding with the City of Kalamazoo does regarding their deer population.

This might be an issue that eventually comes back to the board.

### **Agenda for June Meeting**

We will mainly discuss what happened at the city council meeting the night before regarding our recommendations. We will also have a tutorial on Dropbox since that will be the platform that we use going forward.

Tim brings up that he will be ordering Purple Loosestrife beetles soon and that he needs some volunteers to run the May 20<sup>th</sup> Garlic Mustard pull at Celery Flats. Dave and Jerry will attend the pull.

Kathy makes a motion to adjourn, seconded by Martha.

Meeting adjourned at 8:13pm.

/s/ Tim Winslow